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Identical letters dated 14 March 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, and further to previous letters regarding serious and recurring Turkish violations and attacks on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic, I should like to draw your attention to the latest attacks being launched by the Turkish regime against the Syrian people, their property, and the unity and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic. Those attacks constitute a threat to international peace and security, and come in the context of the Turkish regime's open support for terrorism.

- On 10 January 2017, Turkish forces crossed 8.7 km into Syrian territory over a 5.5 km stretch at the village of Jurn in the Amuda district of Hasakah governorate. They were accompanied by Turkish vehicles that cleared land belonging to Syrian citizens, cut down their trees, began excavations and started building a barrier wall inside Syrian territory that to date is 21 km long.
- On 24 January 2017, Turkish forces crossed 60 metres into no-man's-land opposite the village of Shamarin in the I'zaz district of Aleppo governorate. They commandeered land belonging to Syrian citizens, cleared it, cut down olive trees, began excavations and started building a barrier wall in the direction of the Bab al-Salamah border crossing.
- During January 2017, the Turkish authorities completed construction of a barrier wall inside Syrian territory in the Tall Abyad district of Raqqah governorate. In so doing, they infringed on public and private property in the region and destroyed Syrian grain silos adjacent to the railway tracks near the barbed-wire strip.
- On 22 February 2017, Turkish forces, accompanied by terrorists from the Ahrar al-Sham movement, crossed 700 metres into Syrian territory over a 3 km stretch at the village of Hassaniyah in the Jisr al-Shughur district of Idlib governorate. They cleared land and uprooted olive trees belonging to the villagers, all in order to finish building the barrier wall in the region. Turkish forces have recently carried out several similar acts of aggression, with support from armed terrorist groups, at the villages of Zawf, Khirbat al-Jawz,

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Bishlamun, Zanbaqi, Durriyah, Nadirah and Fawz, all in the Jisr al-Shughur district of Idlib governorate.

- Turkish forces recently crossed into Syrian territory in the villages of Tuki, Shawrak, Hasidah, Bahirah, Hazrah and Khanki in the Amuda district of Hasakah governorate. They commandeered land belonging to Syrian citizens and cleared it, cut down olive trees, began excavations and started building a barrier wall in those areas. They did the same thing in the Afrin district of Aleppo governorate, where Turkish forces crossed 200 metres over a 4.5 km stretch from the refugee camp at Atmah village towards the villages of Dayr Ballut and Shaykh Khalil. They cut down olive trees and cleared fields in the area.

- The Turkish authorities continued their illegal commandeering of the land and property of Syrian citizens in the Harim district of Idlib governorate. They recently commandeered agricultural fields belonging to Syrian citizens from the Fawwar area towards the villages of Zal'um, Harkush, Wazwazat, Kafr Hum, Fawziyah and Tulul, crossing 1 km into Syrian territory over a 13 km stretch. They enclosed the area with a prefabricated concrete barrier wall and moved border stones to plant them in Syrian territory on the other side of the barrier wall. The Turkish authorities also moved the barbed wire strip 1 km inside Syrian territory along the stretch between Harim and Bab al-Hawa. They cleared land belonging to Syrian citizens, cut down fruit-bearing trees in the area, began to dig a ditch and filled it in with concrete barriers.

- Recently, the Turkish authorities set up three military bases inside Syrian territory in the city of I'zaz and its countryside in Aleppo governorate. The bases contain artillery, armoured vehicles and missile launchers with large platforms. One is located near the national hospital, a second between the villages of Kafr Khashir and Kafr Kalbin towards Minagh airbase, and a third north of the I'zaz area opposite Jabal Barifa.

These Turkish incursions come against the backdrop of the Turkish regime's ongoing aggression over more than five years, which has included provision of various kinds of military, material and logistical support to armed terrorist groups. Turkey has supplied those groups with the latest weaponry. It has brought in foreign terrorist fighters and set up training camps for them on Turkish territory under direct Turkish military and intelligence supervision. It has facilitated the entry of terrorists into Syria while providing them with all the medical facilities they need on Turkish territory. Turkey has intervened militarily in support of terrorist groups inside Syria, to the point of direct military incursions and the establishment of illegal military bases inside Syrian territory. It has attacked public and private property, commandeered the property of Syrian citizens and built walls inside Syrian territory.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic strongly condemns these repeated Turkish crimes and attacks against the Syrian people and the territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic. Those attacks are a flagrant violation of Syrian sovereignty and a shameless breach of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and all the Security Council resolutions on Syria and counter-terrorism, not to mention the principles of friendly relations and good-neighbourliness between States endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic calls on the Security Council to fulfil its responsibility to maintain international peace and security by putting a stop to violations perpetrated against the Syrian people by the Turkish regime, including these repeated incursions into Syrian territory. The Council must hold Turkey accountable and compel it to comply with Security Council counter-terrorism resolutions by fully respecting the sovereignty, territorial integrity and people of the Syrian Arab Republic.

I should be grateful if this letter could be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mounzer **Mounzer**
Minister Plenipotentiary
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Identical letters dated 15 March 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I should like to draw your attention to the following:

At 1320 hours on Wednesday, 15 March 2017, in an ignominious criminal act, a suicide terrorist used an explosive vest to blow himself up in a crowd of people at the main court building in the city of Damascus, killing dozens of civilians — including lawyers, petitioners and employees — and injuring dozens more.

That incident was followed by a second despicable terrorist attack in which another suicide terrorist blew himself up at a popular restaurant in the Rabwah area near the Damascus city centre.

Those two terrorist attacks coincide with the ongoing bombardments by armed terrorist groups of several residential Damascus neighbourhoods with rockets and mortar shells. Those bombardments have killed and injured a large number of civilians, and caused extensive damage to public and private property, including medical clinics and service facilities.

The terrorist attacks constitute the response by the terrorists and their handlers — which include the regimes in Ankara, Riyadh, Doha and other places — to the recent successes of the Syrian Arab Army and its allies against Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the Nusrah Front and associated entities in several parts of Syria. The attacks are intended to increase the suffering of Syrians and to derail efforts to bring the Syrian crisis to an end. It comes as no surprise that the terrorist murderers should time their crimes to coincide with the resumption of the Geneva and Astana talks aimed at finding a solution to the Syrian crisis.

The failure by certain parties to the Astana and Geneva talks to dissociate themselves from terrorist organizations is clear evidence that those parties and the terrorists who committed these cowardly crimes are inextricably linked. Meanwhile, certain Western States are blocking the Security Council from condemning terrorist crimes against the Syrian people and State, which sends a message to the terrorists to continue their terrorist acts against the Syrian people, and encourages their handlers and sponsors to persist in their pro-terrorism policies, which are

threatening international peace and security and undermining any chance of reaching a political solution to the crisis in Syria.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic reiterates that there is no pretext whatsoever that can make it acceptable for certain States to justify the vicious crimes being committed by terrorist groups in Syria. Failure to support the efforts of the Syrian Government to fight terrorism can only be interpreted as support for terrorism and the terrorist handlers. Syria yet again stresses that it will never abandon its war against terrorism, no matter what the challenges and no matter what diversionary tactics are used by certain Security Council States and the global terrorist propaganda machine.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic calls on the Secretary-General and the Security Council to condemn this cowardly terrorist attack in no uncertain terms and to refrain from providing cover for its perpetrators and the Governments and regimes that back terrorists. Syria expects the international community to consolidate its struggle against terrorism by coordinating and cooperating fully with the Syrian Government. It is also unacceptable and indefensible to ignore the fact that fighting terrorism is the main prerequisite for the restoration of security and stability to Syria and the entire region.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic calls on those States that have blocked the Security Council from taking a clear stand against the terrorist attacks — and against the Governments and regimes of States that support terrorist groups — to put an end to all forms of support, both secret and open, that they provide to terrorist organizations, and to fully implement United Nations counter-terrorism resolutions, including resolutions 1267 (1999), 1373 (2001), 2170 (2014), 2178 (2014), 2199 (2015) and 2253 (2015), as well as the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the resolution adopted at the conclusion of the fifth United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy Review.

I should be grateful if this letter could be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mounzer **Mounzer**
Minister Plenipotentiary
Chargé d'affaires a.i.